Model of strategies in developing Islamic thought through curriculum: a study of Sumatra Thawalib 1900-1942

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Abstract

This paper describes the models of strategies for developing of Islamic thoughts through curriculum discovered by Sumatera Thawalib. Sumatera Thawalib is the study centre of development of Islamic thought in Sumatera. The study uses a historical approach and covers the history during 1900 to 1942. The study centre is well known as part of modern Islamic movement. However, its strategy in thought development is not linear with the strategy of modern Islamic movement. In practical, Thawalib is in line with the model of neo-modern strategy. The developing of Thawalib Islamic thought does not necessarily lead Thawalib scholars to invalidate the works of classical scholars. However, the thought leads them to appreciate and posits the works of classical scholars as a guidance to scaffold students' thought to be more rational and dynamic. Thawalib strategy has proven that it gives significant contribution to the development of reforming Islamic thought in Indonesia.

Makalah ini menjelaskan model strategi untuk mengembangkan pemikiran Islam melalui kurikulum yang dikembangkan oleh Sumatera Thawalib.

Sumatera Thawalib adalah pusat studi pengembangan pemikiran Islam di Sumatera. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan historis dan mencakup sejarah selama 1900 sampai 1942. Organisasi ini dikenal sebagai bagian dari gerakan Islam modern. Namun, strategi dalam pengembangan pemikiran tidak linier dengan strategi gerakan Islam modern. Dalam praktek, Thawalib ini sejalan dengan model strategi neo-modern. Perkembangan Thawalib dalam pemikiran Islam tidak selalu membawa para ulama Thawalib untuk membatalkan karya ulama klasik. Namun, pikiran itu membuat mereka menghargai dan berpendapat bahwa karya-karya ulama klasik dapat dijadikan sebagai pedoman pemikiran siswa agar menjadi lebih rasional dan dinamis. Strategi Thawalib telah membuktikan bahwa hal itu memberikan kontribusi yang signifikan terhadap perkembangan reformasi pemikiran Islam di Indonesia.

Keywords: *Sumatera Thawalib; Development of thoughts; Neo-modern; Kaum Muda; Kaum Tua*

Introduction

The period from 1900 to 1942 has a special significant contribution for the history of Islam in Southeast Asia. Deliar Noer contends that the recent role of Islam in Indonesia can be traced primarily from that period.[1] During that period, an important event in Indonesia is the emergence of the reformation movement in the fields of *kalam* (theology) and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) through formal educational institutions. This movement is driven by several factors including the syncretic nature of Islam in Indonesia, the inefficiency of religious education and the orientalists' negative perspectives about Islam.[2]

This paper focuses on the Sumatera Thawalib in Minangkabau. This area has been an important site for the dissemination of reformists' ideas to other regions. The Padang Modernists or Youth Modernists emerge in

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[1] Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam di Indonesia 1900-1942*, Jakarta: LP3ES, 1980, 7.
[2] Mukti Ali, *Alam Pikiran Islam Modern di Indonesia*, Yogyakarta: Yayasan "Nida", 1969, 13.

this area.[3] Burhanuddin Daya argues that Sumatera Thawalib has contributed to the country and religion.[4] Sidi Ibrahim Boechari appreciates Thawalib as an institution with a distinctive style that bring about significant modernization in Sumatra.[5] Moreover, Arif subhan explicates that Sumatra Thawalib is an important and perhaps the most influential institution in reformation movement of Islamic education in Minangkabau..[6] Similarly, Van der Plas in Taufik Abdullah recognizes Thawalib in 1928 as "a very high quality and contradictive education system compared with the old one. It is not based on learning by heart but on thinking and comprehension".[7]

The subject matters of Thawalib's trademarks are *kalam* (theology), *fiqh, tafsir, hadith,* and Arabic grammar. This paper explores Thawalib's strategy in developing textbooks curriculum used in teaching those subjects. The exploration is intended to answer the following questions; How Thawalib posits the classic textbooks in their curriculum? How Thawalib socialises the reformists' thought in their curriculum? What model of strategies is implemented in developing Islamic thought through their curriculum? What are the implications of Thawalibs' strategy?

To answer those questions, the writer uses primary, secondary and tertiary data including Thawalib magazines, textbooks, books of Thawalib leaders and other relevant books. According to Kuntowijoyo, this historical account will contribute to both scholarly theoretical discourse and

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[3] Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern...*, 36.

[4] Burhaduddin Daya, *Gerakan Penbaharuan Pemikiran Islam Kasus Sumatera Thawalib,* Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 1990, 92.

[5] Sidi Ibrahim Bukhari, *Pengaruh Timbal Balik Antara Pendidikan Islam dan Pergerakan Nasional di Minangkabau,* Jakarta: Gunung Tiga, 1981, 85.

[6] Arief Subhan, *Lembaga Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia Abad ke-20,* Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media, 2012, 109.

[7] Taufik Abdullah, *School and Politics The Kaum Muda Movement in West Sumatra,* New York: Cornell University, 1971, 58.

practical discourse of Islamic thoughts.[8]

This study on Thawalib is not the first one. Burhanuddin Daya in his introduction chapter has enlisted some papers discussing different aspects of Sumatera Thawalib.[9] However, this paper strives to contribute different information about Thawalib from the aspect of strategy models for development of Islamic thoughts through Thawalib's curriculum.

The encouragement of literature development

Prior to the 20th Century, Indonesian religious education is carried out under the leadership of *Kyais, modin* or *Lebai* (religious leaders). They will conduct religious gatherings in *Langgar* or *Surau* (a place to offer prayer that is smaller than a mosque), in the mosque or in their own house. The themes of these gatherings are congruent with their traditional religious understanding. According to Hurgronje, students firstly learn to read Qur'an. Their study focuses mainly on reading and memorizing Qur'an instead of understanding its content or meaning.[10]

Having finished reading the Qur'an, some of them will move on to study classical books. This study takes place at *langgar* or pesantren (religious boarding school).[11] At this level, the first lesson for students is Arabic language as this language is used in the classical books.

Students will spend around six months to six years or more on their study of Arabic grammar depending on the *Kyai* and students' capacity.[12] Hurgronje says that students learn Arabic grammar in order to understand important books on Islam, including books of law (*fiqh*).[13] After the

[8] Kuntowijoyo, *Metodologi Sejarah*, Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2003, 31-39.

[9] Burhaduddin Daya, *Gerakan Penbaharuan...*, 14-15.

[10] C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Kumpulan Karangan Snouck Hurgronje VII*, Terj. Soedarso Soekarno, Jakarta: INIS, 1993, 141. C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Islam di Hindia Belanda*, terj. S. Gunawan, Jakarta: Bhratara Karya Aksara, 1983, 28-29.

[11] Mahmud Junus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia*, Jakarta: Mutiara, 1957, 41.

[12] Karel A. Steenbrink, *Pesantren...*, 14.

[13] C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Kumpulan Karangan...*, 35.

students are considered to have accomplished h their study of Arabic grammar, they move on to study books of *fiqh, tawḥīd* (theology), *uṣūl al-Dīn* (fundamentals of religion) and *tafsīr* (Quranic exegesis). These subjects are prerequisites for taking other supplementary subjects such as Sufism, *hadith, hisāb* (mathematics), or *falaq* (astronomy).[14] Those Islamic books written in Arabic are perceived to be more authoritative than those written in Malay.[15]

In Java, Pesantrens tend to use classical Arabic books while those in Minangkabau prefer books written in Malay.[16] *Surau/langgar* (a place to offer prayer that is smaller than a mosque) in Malay areas use books written by Malay scholars.[17] The difference is in the level of understandability since there are many productive scholars in Aceh who write about Islam in Malay before the 20th century. Some of their works are translation versions of Arabic books but some others contain compilations from multiple books. Teaching on Islamic jurisprudence tends to refer to the literature of the Syafi'i school but not refer to the works of al-Shafi'i.[18] The Competence of the *Kyais* in Arabic is gained from their educational background in Arabic. Some of them even pursue their education in Mecca which is the center of Islamic education in the 19th century.[19] At that time, Mecca is the center of trans-national Islamic study. Azyumardi

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[14] Karel A. Steenbrink, *Pesantren...,* 14.

[15] C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Kumpulan Karangan...,*21, 29.

[16] Sidi Ibrahim Bukhari, *Pengaruh Timbal Balik...,* 73.

[17] Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Fiqh di Pesantren Indonesia dan Malaysia", dalam *Pesantren,* Vol. VI, No. 1 (1989), 38.

[18] Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam...,* 11.

[19] Karel A. Steenbrink, *Pesantren...,* 18. The tradition of Indonesian Muslims visiting the Hejaz for pilgrimage or study began in the 17th century. Some lived in Mecca for several years, and some eventually settled there. After the mid-19th century, the number of pilgrims from Indonesia increased rapidly. In 1852 some 413 people went on pilgrimage, and the number increased to 12,985 in 1853 to 1858. See M. Shaleh Putuhena, *Historiografi Haji Indonesia*, Yogyakarta: LKIS, 2007, 127.

Azra asserts that in beginning of the 17th century, scholars in Mecca and Medina come from a big number of countries. Scholars and students come from peripheral regions including Indonesia, Africa and China.[20]

In the second half of the 19th century, the tradition of Indonesian Moslem visiting Hejaz remains. Some of them spend their time establishing a sense of brotherhood with Moslems from other countries.[21] As result, they become well known scholars in and outside their home country. They are also believed to have competency both in Islam and in politics.

Among them, there is Syeikh Ahmad Khatib (1860-1916 AD) from Minangkabau. He follows al-Syafi'i in *fiqh* and theologically he is an Ash'arite. However, he is against the *tarekat* (Sufi path). Khatib allows his students to read Muhammad Abduh's writings including *al-'Urwah al-Wuthqā* magazine and *Tafsīr al-Manār*.[22]

Some students of Syeikh Ahmad Khatib follow Muhammad Abduh thoughts but others do not. For those who disagree with Syeikh Ahmad Khatib's thoughts are known as *Kaum Muda* (the Young Group). Most of them come from West Sumatra including Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah (HAMKA) and Haji Abdullah Ahmad. For those who are in line with Syeikh Ahmad Khatib are called Kaum Tua (the Old Group). They become the defenders of traditional Islam (the Islam *adat*).[23] *Kaum Tua* and *Kaum Muda* have the same idea concerning the urgency of education and freedom but they are different on how to purify *tawḥīd* (the oneness of God) which literature to accept and the role of *ijtihad*. Eventually, those differences affect the educational literature.

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[20] Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama: Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara abad XVII dan XVIII*, Bandung: Mizan, 1994, 79-84.

[21] Burhaduddin Daya, *Gerakan Pembaharuan...*, 7-8.

[22] Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam...*, 39. Akhria, *Syeikh Ahmad Khatib Ilmuan Islam di Permulaan Abad Ini*, Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1983, 21.

[23] HAMKA, *Pengaruh Muhammad Abduh Di Indonesia*, Djakarta: Tintamas, 1961, 10.

Kaum Muda indirectly are influenced by Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida with regard to educational reformation.[24] They are also indirectly influenced by Jamaluddin al-Afghani regarding the anti-colonial political movement.[25] However, *Kaum muda* (the Young Group) do not adopt entirely the Middle Eastern reformers' thoughts. They have consideration to local coalitions to develop movement strategies. Therefore, they modify the movement's format. They also continue the transmission through Al-Imam magazine in Singapore and al-Munir in Padang.[26] Among them, there are the founders of Sumatera Thawalib such as Haji Abdullah Ahmad (1878-1933) in Padang Panjang, Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah (1875-1945) in Padang Panjang, Haji Muhammad Thaib Umar (1874-1920) in Batu Sangkar and Haji Ibrahim Musa (1884-1963) in Parabek.

Strategy models of Thawalib

The main goal of Thawalib is to help students' progress and become knowledgeable and skillfull for the shake of their prosperity both in this world and hereafter. [27] The subject matters taught at Sumatera Thawalib related mainly to religious knowledge. According to Mahmud Junus, the textbooks of Thawalib are carried out gradually from the lowest to highest grades. The adjustment in teksbooks reflects Thawalib strategy for reforming Islamic thought.[28] In order to highlight the significance of the change in curriculum, my analysis will base on Brockelmann's "Geschichte Der Arabischen Literature," published in 1938, as an addition to Mahmud Junus' information.

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[24] Arbiyah Lubis, *Pemikiran Muhammadiyah dan Muhammad Abduh*, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1993, 317.

[25] Charles C. Adams, *Islam And Modernism In Egypt*, New York: Russel, 1933, 38.

[26] HAMKA, *Ajahku*, Djakarta: Widjaya, 1950, 48. William R. Roff, *The Origin of Malay Nationalism*, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1967, 56-67.

[27] Taufik Abdullah, *School and Politics...*, 61.

[28] Mahmud Junus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam...*, 75, 153. HAMKA, *Ajahku...*, 41.

In order to find strategy models of Thawalib, the writer adopts theory models of Islamic thought stated by Muhamimin.[29] According to Muhaimin there are four different models of Islamic thoughts. The first one is the Salafi textualist model. It tries to understand textually the Quran and Sunnah without regard for the concrete situations or the dynamics of Muslim communities in either contemporary or classical era. The second one is the traditionalist *madhhab*-based model that utilizes a classical Islamic thought but it does not consider the socio-historical or cultural life of each community. The third one is modernist model which considers mainly the socio-historical and cultural conditions and challenges faced by contemporary Muslim society, while neglecting the classical Muslim intellectual heritage. The fourth one is the neo modernist model which tries to utilize the classical Muslim intellectual heritage while at the same time accommodate the needs and challenges of the modern world.

In this paper, those models are modified to be strategy models for development of Islamic thoughts through education curriculum. The first models is textual *salafiyah* strategy which tries to encourage students to understand textually the Quran and Sunnah, without regard for the concrete situations or the dynamics of Muslim communities in either the contemporary or classical era. As the consequence, the literature of traditional Islamic *surau* and modern are applied in the curriculum.The second model is traditional madzhabiyah strategy that encourage students to utilizes classical Islamic thought but it does not consider the socio-historical or cultural life of each community. As result, traditional Islamic literature surau becomes guidance while modern Islamic literature is left out.The third model is modern strategy which encourage students to consider mainly the socio-historical and cultural conditions and challenges

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[29] Muhaimin, *Pemikiran dan Aktualisasi Pengembangan Pendidikan Islam*, Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2011, 21-25.

faced by contemporary Muslim society, while neglecting the classical Muslim intellectual heritage. As the consequence, traditional literature *surau* is taken out from curriculum. The fourth model is neo-modern strategy which encourage students to try out the classical Moslem intellectual heritage while at the same time accommodate the needs and challenges of modern world. As the consequence, the relevant traditional Islamic literature surau is applied meanwhile modern Islamic literature is implemented gradually.

Table 1
Strategy models for development of Islamic thoughts
in educational curriculum

Strategy models	Traditional Islamic *surau* literature	Modern Islamic literature
Textual Salafiyah	No	No
Traditional Madhhabiyah	Yes	No
Modern	No	Yes
Neo-modern	Yes	Yes

Based on those 4 strategy models, Thawalib well known as a modern Islamic movement in Indonesia actually does not devote to the modern strategy model in its thought development. Surprisingly, Thawalib does not follow *salafiyah* traditional strategy model. Those facts are characterised in Thawalib curriculum used traditional literature in the subjects of fiqh, kalam, Tafsir, Hadits, dan bahasa Arab. For example, The *fiqh* curriculum in grade 1 to 3 is based on the Syafi'ie school. It is like in any other pesantren prior to 1900. Grade one uses *Matan Taqrīb* by Abu Syuja' (d. ± 600/1203). Grades two and three refer to the commentary *Fath al-Qarib* by Al-Ghazi (W. 918/1512) which students can study less than one year.[30]

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[30] The book of *Fatḥ al-Qarīb* has the same content with the book of *Taqrīb*, but its explanatory is broader. It includes the explanatory of the content of Hadis. See Abu Syuja' *Taqrib*, Pekalongan: Raja Murah, N.A., 3.

In grade 4 to grade 7, there is the book of *Fatḥ al-Mu'in* by Zainuddin al-Malabari (d. 982/1574) and *al-Muhadhdhab* by Ibrahim Ash-Shirazi al Fairuzabadi (d. 476/1083). The *tawḥid* curriculum in grade 1 to 3 is based on the work of Sunni-Asy'arie scholars, namely *Matan Sanusi* by Abu Abdillah as-Sanusi al-Hasani (w. 895/1490) which deals with the foundations of faith including the necessary and impossible attributes of God. Thawalib teaches *tawḥid* to students after they understood the *fiqh* book *Fatḥ al-Qaīib*. In grade 4 to 7, the *tawḥid* curriculum has previously been based on *matan Sanusi* and then on *Syarh Sanusi* by Abdallah Muhammad at Telemsani. For students in grade 5, these books are replaced by a famous book, *Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya li a1-Muḥāfaẓa 'ala 'Aqā'id al-Islāmiyya* by Husaya at-Tarabulusi (d. 1909)[31] and *Umm al-Barahin* by Abu Abdallah as Sanusi al Hasani (d. 895/1490).[32] The *tafsir* curriculum in grade 1 to 3 is based on *Tafsīr Jalālayn* by Jalaluddin al-Mahalli (d. 864/1460) and Jalal

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[31] *Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya* (*Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya li a1-Muḥāfaẓa 'ala 'Aqā'id al-Islāmiyya*) *is* a work on *sifat,* prophecy, miracles of prophets, the angels, and life after death by the moderate modernist and rasionalist writer Husayn (b. M. al-Jasr) Efendi at-Tarabulusi (d. 1909). The author was renowned as editor of a journal in which he attempted to reconcile Islam with modern science and philosophy. Martin Van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning, Book in Arabic Script Used In The Pesantren Milieu", dalam *Bijdragen Tot De Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde,* Deel 146, 2e en 3e, 1990, 252

[32] The contents of *Umm al-Barahin* include "...reached a high degree of systematization due to the introduction of philoshophical elements on the doctrine of knowledge, the proof of God's, existence, and the logical categories of *wujub* (necessity), *istihalah* (inadmissibility), and *jawaz* (admissibility) Omar Awang,, "The Major Arabic Sources Which Determinated the Structure of Islamic thought i Malay Archipalago Before the Ninetenth Century A.D. in Field of Law, theology and Sufism", in Lutpi Ibrahim, *Islamika Esei-esei Sempena Abad ke-15 Hijriyah,* Kuala Lumpur: Sarjana Enterprise, 1980, p. 83. Mohd. Nor bin Ngah states that Ummu al-Barahin was renowned not only in Indonesia but also in Malaysia and some other countries. JD Luciani, PH. Wolff and Frederick J. Barny translated Umm al-Barahin into French, German, and English. See Mohd. Nor Ngah, "Some Writing of the Traditional Malay Muslim Scholars Found in Malaya", in Khoo Kay Kim, *Tamadun Islam di Malaysia,* Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah, Malaysia, 1980, 10. According to Abdul Kadir Munsyi (1796-1854), the book became a reference for religious study in Melaka. See Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi, *Hikayat Abdullah,* Vol. 1, Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1974, 42.
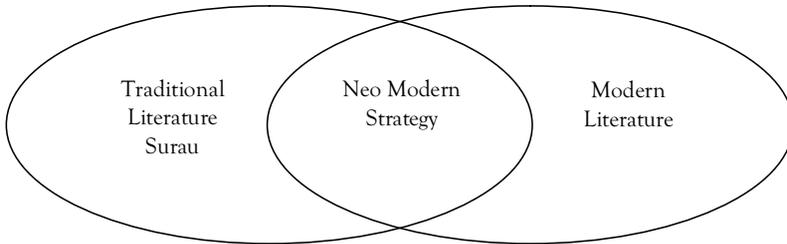
ad-Din as-Suyuti (d. 911/1505). The *hadith* curriculum is based on *Arba'in al-Nawawi* by Abu Zakariya an-Nawawi. This is the Sunni work which is not included in Seyyed Hossein Nasser's list of Shi'ite *hadith* literature.[33] *Hadith* is taught by rote memorization.[34] Since the beginning, the book of grammar is based on the following books: *Matan al-Ajurumiyah* by Abu Abdallah al-Sanhaji b. Ajurum (d. 723/1323), *Mukhtaṣar* of Hamiduddin Ahmad ad-Darirli al-Quhandisi, *Tamrīn al-Ṭullāb* by Syeikh Khalid Azhari, (d. 905/1500) and *Qaṭr al-Nadā* by Muhammad Yusuf Abdallah ibn Hisham (d. 761/1360). Instruction is elevated in grade 6 by the use of *Ibn Aqil* and *Talkhis*. *Ibn Aqil* is an Arabic grammar book written as a commentary on the *Alfiyah* of Ibn Malik. The Arabic declension curriculum for beginners uses *Matan al-Binā wa al-Asas* by Mulla ad-Danqari followed by *Mukhtaṣar* of Hamiduddin Ahmad al-Darirli al-Quhandisi. Students in grade 2 are required to understand *Kailānī* by Abu Hasan 'Ali Kailani As-Shafi'i. The highest level of Arabic declension is in grade 5 which uses Taftazani's book. The understanding of specific meanings in the development of Arabic literature is supported by Arabic sciences (*Ma'ānī* and *badī'*).

Thawalib does not use traditional madzhabiyah strategy in developing their thoughts because this institution uses modern literature and its development methods. For example, the subject of fiqh uses *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid* by Ibn Rushd and the subject of tawḥīd uses *Risālah Tawḥīd* by Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905). Meanwhile, the subject of Tafsir *uses Al-Manār,* by Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida.

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[33] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam Tradisi di Tengah Kancah Dunia Modernitas*, terjemahan Lukman Hakim, Bandung: Pustaka, 1987, 173-174.

[34] HAMKA, *Kenang-kenangan Hidup*, Djakarta: Gapura, 1951, 41-43.

Image 1

The literature conjuction of neo-modern curriculum

Traditional Literature Surau — Neo Modern Strategy — Modern Literature

Based on the previous explanation, the writer concludes that Thawalib does not devote to some strategy models of development of Islamic thoughts. They are including modern, textual *salafiyah* and traditional *madhhabiyah*. Thawalib tends to develop the strategy model of neo modern. It can be indicated from the use of traditional Islamic literature in Thawalib's educational curriculum. That literature is as scaffolding which lead students comprehend modern thoughts in the field of fiqh, tauhid, tafsir and Arabic language. Some evidences are in the following:
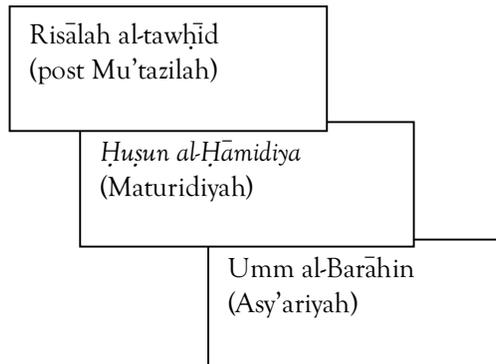
The subject of tawḥīd

Having studied *Umm al-Barāhin*, they move into *Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya* by Husaya at-Tarabulusi (d. 1909) and *Risālah Tawḥīd* by Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905). Unlike in pesantrens, in Thawalib consider *Umm al-Barāhin* and *Ḥuṣun al-Ḥamidiya* as a preparation to the study a more rational subject, *tawḥīd*, in the next higher class. This is an evident that *Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya* is more rational than *Umm al-Barāhin* and *Risālah Tawḥīd. Moreover Risalah Tawḥīd* is even more rational than *Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya.*[35]

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[35] Muhammad Abduh does not employ theological approach, but philosophical. The philosophical approach is obvious in his book *Risālah Tawḥīd*, Cairo: Dar al-Manar, 1366 H, 62. *Risālah Tawḥīd* emphasizes the urgency of reason. Abduh argues that following classical Ulama is stupidity. *Taqlid* (following ulama without understanding the reason) has been the biggest barrier for the progress of Islam.

Martin Van Bruinessen classifies Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya as the work of a "moderate modernist and rationalist writer."[36] Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya is a type of Sumatera Thawalib since it is not used in Java, Madura,[37] or in PERTI madrasahs.[38] This fact shows that Thawalib Risālah Tawḥīd become the highest-level textbook on tawhḥid. Harun Nasution contends that Muhammad Abduh's theological ideas have much in common with Mu'tazilite theology. The power of reasons in Muhammad Abduh's perspective has more density than among the Mu'tazilites.[39] Such vision of Risālah Tawḥīd is different from that of Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya which follows Sunni Maturidi theology.[40]

Image 2

The development of tawḥīd literature In neo-modern strategy

Risālah al-tawḥīd
(post Mu'tazilah)

Ḥuṣun al-Ḥāmidiya
(Maturidiyah)

Umm al-Barāhin
(Asy'ariyah)

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[36] Martin Van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning", dalam Bijdragen Tot De Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde, Deel 146, 2e en 3e, 1990, 252.

[37] Karel A. Stenbrink, Beberapa Aspek tentang Islam di Indonesia Abad ke-19, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1984, 155-157.

[38] Mahmud Junus, Sejarah Pendidikan Islam..., 100.

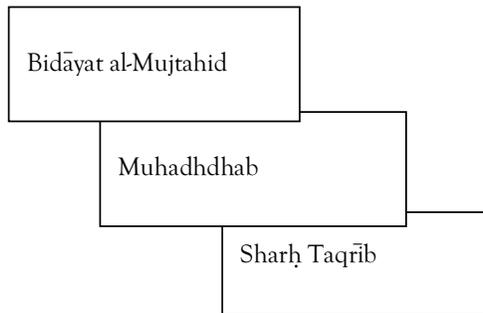[39] Harun Nasution, Pembaharuan dalam Islam: Sejarah Pemikiran dan Gerakan, Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1975, 92-93.

[40] Husain b. Muhammad Al-Jisr Attharabulisi, Al-Ḥuṣun Al-Ḥāmidiya, Indonesia: Dār Al-Iḥyā' Al-Kitāb Al-'Arabiyah, 7.

The subject of the fiqh

When Engku Mudo Abdul Hamid Hakim lead Thawalib, he replaces *al-Muhadhdhab* with his own book written in Arabic; *al-Durus al-Fiqhiyah al-Thāniyah al-Mubīn Muʿin.* It is more contextual.[41] This replacement marks the beginning of reformation ideas in the field of *fiqh* by using a different book from the Sunni and Syafi'ie books commonly used in pesantrens and PERTI (Association of Islamic Education).[42] The adjustment in *fiqh* literature in Grade 6 occurs more drastically than in any other Islamic school. Other schools use Syafi'ie books by Mahalli but HAKA replaces it with *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid* by Ibn Rushd who is a Muslim scholar and philosopher.[43] Martin Van Bruinessen says that *Bidayāt al-Mujtahid* is firstly used by Minangkabau reformers as a textbook in the 1920s.[44]

Image 3

The development of *fiqh* literature in neo-modern strategy

| Bidāyat al-Mujtahid |
| Muhadhdhab |
| Sharḥ Taqrīb |

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[41] Mahmud Junus, *Sejarah pendidikan Islam*, p. 153. The book of *Al-Muʿin al-Mubin* is the continuation of the book of *al-Durus al-Fiqhiyah,* volume 1 by Zainuddin Labai who passed away before continuing his work to write the following chapters. The main reference of the book is Ibnu Taimiah. See Burhanuddin Daya, *Gerakan Pembaharuan...*, 212-213.

[42] Mahmud Junus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam...*, 98.

[43] Mahmud Junus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam...*, 153.

[44] Martin van Bruinessen, "Pesantren dan Kitab Kuning Pemeliharaan dan Kesinambungan Tradisi Pesantren," in Journal of Science and Culture, *Ulumul Qur'an*, Vol. III, No. 4 (1992), 46.

The subject of tafsir

Having studied *Tafsīr Jalālayn*, *tafsir* curriculum is elevated by using *Tafsīr Khāzin* (*Lubab al-Ta'wīl fi Ma'ān al-Tanzīl*) by Ilauddin al Baghdadi (d. H 741).[45] The reformation at Thawalib becomes even clearer by the use of *Tafsīr Baiḍāwī* or *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl* written by Nasir b. Nashiruddin Abu Said Abdullah ibn Umar (d. 685/1286). This tafsir methodologically combines *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr* and *tafsīr bi al-ra'y*.[46] It has been argued that *tafsir Baiḍāwī* is a summary of *tafsir al-Kashshāf* by Imam Zamakhsari excluding its Mu'tazilite aspects.[47] In pesantren tradition, this *tafsir* is used by the Kyai [rather than by the students].[48] The reformation at Thawalib is also reflected in the use of *al-Manār* and *Al-Jawāhir* (the work of Tanthawi al-Jauhari). *Al-Manār written* by Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida aims to open the door of *ijtihad*, refute *taqlid*, empower arguments and help Muslims recover from their inferiority.[49] Al-Manār presents commentary that is very rational and helpful in understanding Qur'an.[50]

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[45] Ash-Shabuni argues that this Tafsir was good and even great. Mohd. Ali Ash-Shabuni, *Pengantar Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an,* terj. Surabaya: al-Ikhlas, 1983, 92-93.

[46] It means that the tafsir based on logic and rationality, and not merely on other verses or hadith.

[47] Mahmud Basuni Faudah, *Tafsir-Tafsir Al-Qur'an: Perkenalan dengan Metodologi Tafsir,* terj. H.M. Muchtar Zoerni dan Abdul Qadir Hamid, Bandung: Penerbit Pustaka, 1987, 81-83.
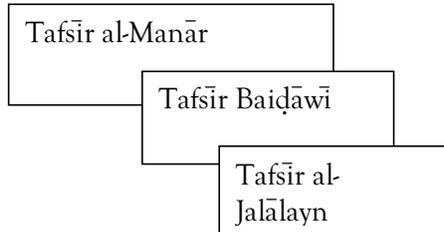
[48] Martin Van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning", dalam *Bijdragen Tot De Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde,* Deel 146, 2e en 3e, 1990, 253.

[49] Harun Nasution, *Pembaharuan dalam Islam...,* 71.

[50] M. Quraish Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an,* Bandung: Mizan, 1992, 91.

Image 4

The development of tafsir literaute in neo-modern strategy

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Tafsīr al-Manār         │
│        ┌────────────────────┐
│        │ Tafsīr Baiḍāwī     │
└────────│          ┌──────────────────┐
         │          │ Tafsīr al-       │
         └──────────│ Jalālayn         │
                    └──────────────────┘
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Learning hadith

Students begin learning hadith with the *Arba'in* of al-Nawawi and then *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* by Mustasfa M. Umara. The latter hadith is based on two sources, *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* by Abu Abdullah Muhammad al-Ja'fari (d. 256 H) and *Al-Is'ād fi Mukhtaṣar al-Irshād* by al-Ahmad al-Qasthalani al-Qahiri al-Shafii (d. 923 H). The *Arba'in* contains 40 *hadith* whereas *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* has 700 ones.[51] *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī* is not popular among boarding schools and Surau/Langgar.[52] Students at Thawalib also study *Muṣṭalāḥ Hadith* (technical terms regarding *hadith*) in order to understand the methodological aspects of *hadith* studies. Their textbook is *Matan Baiquniyah* by Taha al-Baiquni (d. 1080/1669 AD). At the end of hadith class, students are guided to study *hadith* from the primary sources, *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

Critical thinking

It is developed among students from the beginning of grade 5 including *mantiq* (logic) as one of subject matters. This is a new tradition which is different from the mainstream of pesantrens. *Mantiq* relates to philoso-
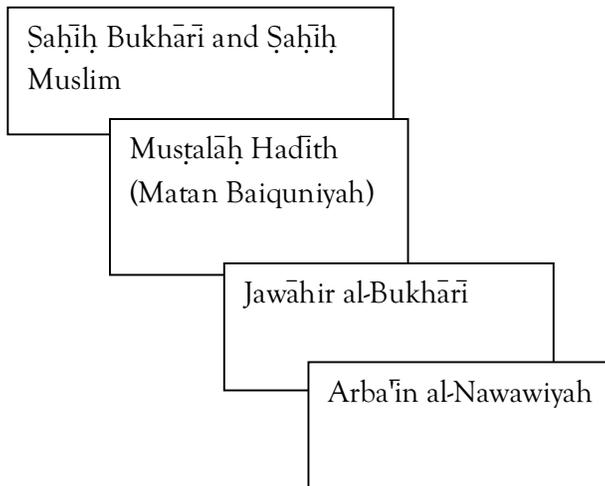
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[51] Mustafa Muhammad Umara, *Jawāhir al-Bukhārī*, Mesir: Istiqamah, 1371 H, see *mukaddimah*.

[52] Mahmud Junus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam...*, 100.

phy which is rejected by pesantrens. It is in accordance with the teaching in al-Zarnuji's book *Ta'līm al-Muta'allim* which is famous in the pesantrens.[53] Al-Akhdlari argues that *mantiq* is like grammar, protects human mind and their understanding from fallacy.[54]

Image 5

The development of tafsir literature in neo-modern strategy

Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim

Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim

Musṭalāḥ Hadīth (Matan Baiquniyah)

Jawāhir al-Bukhārī

Arba'in al-Nawawiyah

The Implication of neo-modern strategy

Neo modern strategy of Thawalib has two characters; realistic and evolutionary. Thawalib needs to be realistic because they have to confront four hardships. Firstly, the reality of major Moslems thoughts is traditional. Secondly, the reformist ulama have identical discourse between

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[53] Al-Zarnuji, *Ta'līm Al-Muta'allim*, tahqiq Imam Ghazali Said, Surabaya: Diayana Tama,1997, 49.

[54] Muhammad Saghir Al-Akhdari, *Matn Sullam Munauraq,* Surabaya: Maktabah Assaqafiyah, NA., 2.

religious ideas and politic ones. Thirdly, traditional literature has been a strong foundation for surau in Sumatera. Lastly, modern Islamic literature still has a few followers and it is not widely recognised by Moslems. The realistic character of Thawalib lead to the evolutionary character in developing Thawalib's thoughts.

The evolutionary character of Thawalib in developing its thought is different from Padri movement in Minagkabau which is revolutionary and radical. The radical character of Padri is inspired by wahhabi movement in taking down Mecca in the beginning of 1803. Padri replicates Wahhabi characters in their activities. They have no hesitation to deal with violence in confronting different religious and political views. Formerly, Padri have a conflict with local society. Simultaneously, they commit to have a war with Holland troops which nurture the local society (1821-1836).[55]

It is quite distinct that Padri characters is different from Thawalib ones. Thawalib critically debates the acts of *bid'ah, khurafat* and *taqlid*. However, they still use traditional Islamic literature as surau ulama do. The founders of Thawalib are not radical towards colonial authorities. Thawalib's charge of persons such as Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah takes diplomatic format to confront colonial authorities. Abdullah Ahmad is very accommodative toward colonial policy. Therefore, Steenbrink recognizes him as "a modernisator becomes a hollandisator".[56]

This is the method how thought mission of Thawalib vastly spreads out in Sumatera and its surroundings. In Thawalib thoughts, they debate or even critically argue the parts of traditional religious understanding.

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[55] M. C. Ricklefs, *Sejarah Indonesia Modern 1200-2004*, Translator Satrio Wahono, et. al., Jakarta: PT Serambi Ilmu Semesta, p.306-305. Taufik Abdullah, "Adat dan Islam: Telaah Mengenai Konflik di Minangkabau:, in Ahmad Ibrahim, et.al. (ed.), *Islam di Asia Tenggara Perspektif Sejarah*, Translator A. Setiawan Abadi, Jakarta: LP3ES, 1989, 64.

[56] Karel A. Steenbrink, *Pesantren...*, 37.

However, some parts of traditional literature are still used as references. Traditional literature is capitalised by Thawalib to scaffold their students to comprehend the content of modern Islamic literature.

Neo modern strategy of Thawalib also provides discussion spaces for youth and elder scholars to give respect to traditional literature of syafi'iyah and Asy'ariyah. Traditional literature correlates different Islamic perspective of youth. For example, it correlates the perspective of Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah in Thawalib Padang Panjang who tends to use "Dynamic madzhab" with Syeikh Ibrahim Musa Parabek who devotes to Syafi'i madzhab.

The Thawalib's respect towards traditional curriculum brings significant impacts psychologically and sociologically to their students. For example, the students accustom with diversity of thought (*ikhtilaf*) and become more critical. They are familiar with the perspective of thoughts and the methodology process because they have learned the theories in the traditional and modern books such as Arabic language, ushul Fiqh, Tafsir and Hadits. Thawalib implicitly suggest that the ones must review traditional literature before they intend learning modern thoughts. The intensive review will lead to understanding and the conclusion of phenomenological perspective in the plurality of Moslem. A sample of the modern thought phenomena of Thawalib alumni is HAMKA. He is once put forward as the chairman of Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). Another sample is Mahmud Junus who is productive writer in the field of Islamic education.

On the top of the strength of the neo modern strategy, the weaknesses remain. One of them is the obsessive generation toward the thoughts of Asya'ariyah and syafi'iyah although they have learned the thoughts of modern ulama such as Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridla.

Conclusion

Sumatera Thawalib is designed as the center for the reformation of Islamic thought through *da'wah* and educational efforts. This institution contradicts to the "school traditionalists" in the fields of theology, *fiqh, tafsir, hadith* and Sufism in Indonesia. The thought of school traditionalists is crystallized in the form of nearly unconditional acceptance of and obedience to Syafi'i *fiqh* and Sunni Asy'arite theology.

In the beginning of the mid-19th century, the presence of students who has studied in Hejaz promotes the thought of the school traditionalists to be more rational and dynamic. In Hejaz, there is an emergence phenomenon of dichotomy between the old and the young groups or between the traditionalists and the modernists.

Methodological differences between the old and the young groups result in divergent views on Islamic disciplines. The differences occur between students and teachers regarding tradition, religious congregations, school preference etc. One example of a divergent view happens between the student; Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah and his teacher; Syeikh Ahmad Khatib. This difference, however, does not either lead the students to lose their respect to their teachers or the teachers to lose their affection to their students. Above all of those differences, they share a common ground; the urgency of education and independence for the glory of Islam.

Although Sumatera thawalib is well known as part of modern Islamic movement, their strategy is not in line with the thoughts of modern model or textual salafiyah. Thawalib tends to develop the strategy model of neo modern. It can be indicated from the use of traditional Islamic literature in Thawalib's educational curriculum. That literature is as scaffolding which lead students comprehend modern thoughts in the field of fiqh, tauhid, tafsir, and Arabic language. Thought reformation of

Thawalib does not necessarily lead them to invalidate the works of classical scholars but lead them to appreciate those works and to posit the works of classical scholars as a guidance to scaffold students' thought to be more rational and dynamic in methodological thinking. The one who is interested in rational thinking should study classical literature first. By doing so, students will achieve stronger and brighter a vision of rationality. The neo modernist strategy, according to Qadri Azizi,[57] encourages students to move from the realm of " merely grasping the words," which leads to blind obedience (*taqlid*), to that of "grasping the methods," which gives them something to follow. The neo modernists can claim to follow a certain school but their loyalty will result methodology (*manhaj*) instead of opinions.

Neomodern strategy teach us the reality and the evolutionary for thought reformation. Such strategy is different from Padri strategy which is revolutionary and radical toward local society and Dutch colonial authority. In recent context, model of neo modern strategy is appropriate to Indonesian context which has a multi-cultural and pluralistic Muslim society. There are two key points in neo modern strategy; accommodating the characters of realistic and evolutionary, and preventing the characters of radical, evolutionary and violence.

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